

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 remain in this application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

The comments provided by the Examiner in section 2 on page 2 of the Office Action were taken into consideration prior to making the amendments set forth above. It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in this application now comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings set forth in section 3 on pages 2-3 of the Office Action should be in order in view of the drawing amendments provided by the replacement sheets appended to this Reply. The replacement sheets show modified versions of Figures 2 and 3 including sections which more clearly indicate that the interior and exterior roof element walls are composed of plastic material.

The indication that claims 14-16 contain allowable subject matter, provided in section 11 on page 6 of the Office Action, is acknowledged with appreciation. It is respectfully submitted, however, that all of the claims of this application are presently allowable.

Each of independent claims 1, 21, and 24 is rejected, along with dependent claims 2-5, 17-20, 22-23, and 25-27, as being unpatentable over British patent specification 1,162,627 to Porsche in view of Japanese document 56-28016 to Kanou. Reconsideration is requested.

According to the present invention, a removable passenger car roof includes both an outer wall and an inner wall which are made of plastic material, for a rigid carrier assembly, and which are connected only at edge zones or peripheral regions of the roof. These features are reflected in each of independent claims 1, 21, and 24, and it is respectfully submitted that these claims are patentable.

The Porsche document discloses a motor vehicle with a roll yoke 6 extending across the passenger compartment, and with a detachable roof 7 which extends as a special component between a windshield frame 2 and the roll yoke and connected to that roof and that yoke. In a first embodiment, shown in Figures 1 to 6, the detachable roof is made of sheet metal. The roof consists of an outer part, forming a roof outer skin, and includes, only on the periphery, a frame-like reinforcement in the form of box-shaped sheet metal member 17.

In a second embodiment, shown in Figure 8 and described at page 3, lines 63 to 76, the detachable roof can be made of plastic instead of sheet metal. Figure 8 shows a peripheral area of such a detachable roof made of plastic. This figure shows that, if the roof consists of plastic, it is made of a single layer with thick walls, and not of an inner wall and an outer wall which form a rigid carrier assembly and which are only connected in peripheral regions, i.e. at edge zones, of the roof.

The Kanou publication shows a vehicle roof with a removable cover that is arranged within a roof opening. The cover 4 is composed of an outer wall 8 and

an inner wall 9. The outer wall 8 and the inner wall 9 comprise on the periphery corresponding tailored flanges and are connected with each other in the area of those flanges. Nothing in either the drawings or the English language summary of the Kanou publication indicates that the outer wall 8 and the inner wall 9 of the cover either are made of high-strength plastic material or form a rigid carrier assembly. Due to the relatively low wall thicknesses of the walls 8 and 9 and the relatively large distance between the two walls from each other, one skilled in the art would likely conclude that the Kanou walls are formed by pressed sheet metal parts.

It is respectfully submitted that, for reasons discussed above, the Porsche and Kanou documents, taken as a whole, do not suggest either a removable roof in which exterior and interior walls are made of a high-strength plastic material, form a rigid member connection, and meet only at edge zones as claim 1 defines or a removable roof element comprising plastic exterior and interior walls which are spaced from one another except at edge zones and connecting means for connecting those walls only at the edge zones as claim 21 defines. For the same reasons, the Porsche and Kanou documents, taken as a whole, do not suggest a method of making a removable roof element comprising the particular forming, placing, and connecting acts or operations recited in claim 24.

The additional secondary references discussed in sections 7-10 on pages 4-6 of the Office Action fail to suggest the provision of structure or the incorporation of acts or operations serving to meet the limitations discussed

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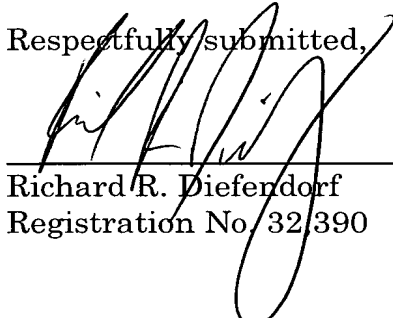
Reply to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

above, and it is submitted that each of claims 1, 21, and 24 is patentable. The rest of the claims in this application are dependent claims and are patentable as well.

Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,



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